

Message Text

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 12187 162007Z

64

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 USSS-00

INRE-00 NSAE-00 /031 W

----- 120636

O R 161720Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4775

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCEUR

JCS

NSC

S E C R E T BEIRUT 12187

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMER

SUBJECT: E AND E PLANNING

REF: STATE 204191

1. CURRENT SITREP CONTAINED BEIRUT

12163. BEIRUT IS CALM

AND OPERATIONS WITHIN CITY ARE RELATIVELY NORMAL. PORT IS ALL

BUT CLOSED WITH PRINCIPAL SHIPPING LINES HAVING CANCELLED

CALLS DUE TO EXTREMELY HIGH INSURANCE RATES NOW IN FORCE.

AIRPORT IS OPEN ALTHOUGH REPORTS ARE THAT FLIGHTS ARE 70 PERCENT

OF NORMAL. SO FAR THERE HAS APPEARED TO BE NO RUN ON

FOODSTUFFS AND SUPPLIES SEEM ADEQUATE.

2. FOLLOWING ARE OUR VIEWS ON QUESTIONS, PARA 2 REFTEL:

A. AS FEW AMERICAN TOURISTS NOW ENTERING LEBANON

WE DO NOT BELIEVE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WARNING AMERICAN

SECRET

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CITIZENS AGAINST TRAVEL TO LEBANON IS NECESSARY. WE

ALSO HAVE IN MIND LEBANESE SENSITIVITY TO SUCH ANNOUNCEMENT.

B. WE DO NOT CONDIDER IT NECESSARY AS YET TO

ENCOURAGE DEPARTURE PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZENS. THEY ARE CERTAINLY AWARE RISKS OF CURRENT SITUATION AND A VERY FEW HAVE LEFT. GIVEN SIZE OF COMMUNITY, ENCOURAGEMENT TO LEAVE COULD NOT BE HANDLED DISCREETLY. LIKELY RESULT WOULD BE MASS EXODUS, WHICH WE DO NOT YET WISH ENCOURAGE.

C. WE ARE NOT YET RECOMMENDING AN EVACUATION, LIMITED OR OTHERWISE.

3. WE ESTIMATE POTENTIAL PRIVATE AMERICAN EVACUEES AT 4500 AND TOURISTS AT 250 MAXIMUM.

4. AMERICAN CITIZENS IN SYRIA. WE HAVE COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES WITH DAMASCUS. WOULD CONSEQUENTLY PREFER ASSESSMENT REQUESTED REFTEL BE SOUGHT THROUGH EMBASSYROME. WE ESTIMATE ABOUT 250 AMERICANS IN SYRIA. BELIEVE MAJORITY IN DAMASCUS AREA WITH ABOUT 30 IN ALEPPO AND FEW SCATTERED THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. AS OF MOMENT BELIEVE COULD BE EVACUATED FROM DAMASCUS TO BEIRUT OR VIA TURKEY ALTHOUGH WITH ISRAELI BOMBING OF HAMA THAT MAY BE MORE DANGEROUS ROUTE.
BUFFUM

SECRET

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